SAN FRANCISCO

CINEMATHEQUE

SPECIAL EVENTS

City Slivers and Fresh Kills:
The Films of Gordon Matta-Clark

Passing Through:
A Philip Hoffman Retrospective

Joseph Cornell Centenary Celebration

Harry Partch's *Delusion of the Fury*

EVENINGS WITH
Claire Bain
Zoe Beloff
Gregg Biermann
Barbara Hammer
Al Hernandez
Alex Mendizabal
Gunvor Nelson
and more...

WINTER 2004

Gordon Matta-Clark, *Conical Intersect*,
March 26

When asked about his wildly ambitious plans for bisecting the Humphrey Street building, a big old 1930s house doomed to demolition in the name of redevelopment, deconstructionist "anarchitect" Gordon Matta-Clark remarked that the process "was kind of suspense-packed up to the last minute."

Matta-Clark's casually urgent approach to cutting, piercing, slicing and altogether altering industrial structures–a methodology grounded in heady philosophical inquiry, arcane obsessions, late-night soul searching, think-tank brainstorming and fortuitous accidents–applies as well to the decidedly circuitous route taken by Cinematheque curators toward the formation of our seasonal program calendars. Sometimes we have a film series planned months or even years in advance, as is the case with *City Slivers and Fresh Kills*, our Matta-Clark retrospective set for late March. Other times we excitedly make room for an artist who calls some rainy late-afternoon with unexpected news of new work and an impending Bay Area visit (welcome back, Barbara Hammer!).

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Steven Jenkins

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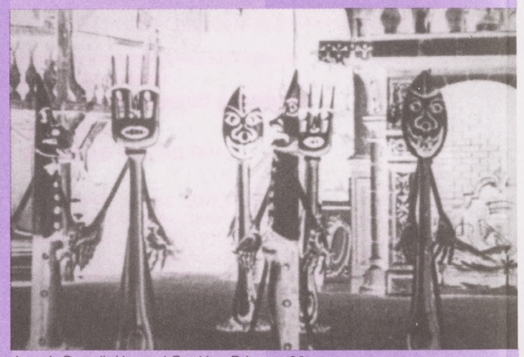

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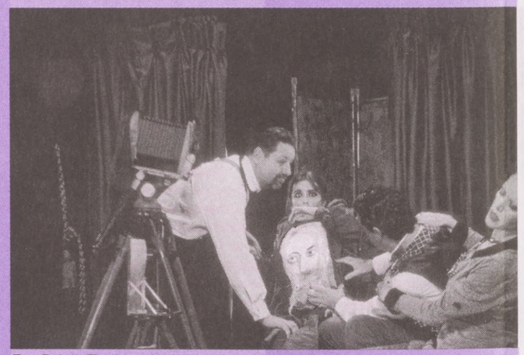

Zoe Beloff, *The Ideoplastic Materializations of Eva C.*, February 29

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- all Cineaste benefits
- private home screening for you and your guests, presented by Cinematheque curators

Memberships are valid for one year from date of purchase.

Please make checks payable to San Francisco Cinematheque.

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Please note that membership dues are not tax-deductible. Donations, however, are fully tax-deductible, and are appreciated anytime and for any amount.

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For up-to-the-minute info, point your browser to
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California College of the Arts

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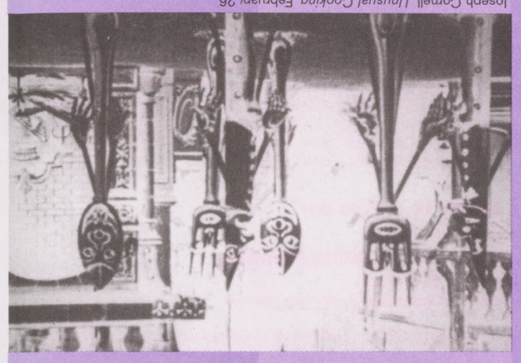

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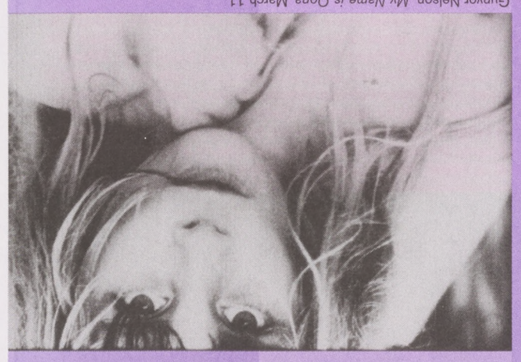

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WINTER 2004

Notes by program curators unless otherwise noted.

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Ninth Street Center for Independent Film

Positively Ninth Street
Co-presented with Film Arts Foundation

For this winter season kick-off we open the doors wide at Cinematheque's Ninth Street home for a free evening of new local film, video, installation and music. In the back space: new works by Sow Yee Au (the performed ***Tristes Tropiques***), Rick Bahto (***The Soft Things***), Elizabeth Block (***Strewnpacked-cinderwhateverlight***), Robert Fox (***The Greater Vehicle***), Marijke Jorritsma (***Stutter***), Katherin McInnis (***Landscapes in Alphabetical Order***), Kim Miskowicz (***Here a Little AND There a Little***), Angel Vasquez (***Azul***) and Hiromi Yoshida (***Weeping Willow***). In the front space: ***Twilight of the Celluloid Age*** (pickled cinematic specimens by Christian Bruno and Natalija Vekic), Wet Gate (the all-projector orchestra) screening on the windows, and the sinister organ sounds of the Spider Compass Good Crime (All Vulture) Band! *(Steve Polta)*

Thursday, February 12 at 7:30 pm
Yerba Buena Center for the Arts

Surveilled City Double Feature: Michael Klier's *Der Riese (The Giant)* and Daniel Barnett's *Endless*

These two documents of vast scope and rich detail are descendents of Walter Ruttman's 1927 *Berlin: Symphony of a City,* a seminal film of the organic, teeming urban day. Times have changed. The city has sprawled and beneath the human din you can hear a monotonous hum of electromechanical remote security. ***The Giant*** (1983) is a new "day in the life" told with found surveillance footage, eavesdropping on the sinister deadpan of German mounted remote surveillance cameras and simulators. ***Endless*** (1990) is an homage to Chicago's plain, its Cartesian grid of streets overlayed on the prairie the land once knew. The film is an optical meditation on the cityscape panning down luscious, high-contrast stills, creating an eternal city out of a few months of instants. (*Konrad Steiner*)

Thursday, February 19 at 7:30 pm
Yerba Buena Center for the Arts

Gregg Biermann's *Material Excess*
Gregg Biermann In Person

Gregg Biermann's feature-length digital video ***Material Excess*** uses supermarket coupons, catalogs, flyers and advertising inserts to pierce through the glossy surface of all manner of printed matter and find a frenetic and visceral currency of cultural excess. Borrowing its three-part structure from Dante's *The Divine Comedy (Inferno, Purgatory* and *Paradise),* the mesmerizing pastiche of *Material Excess* presents a troubling and fascinating odyssey through the bubbling cauldron of modern commercialism. Steve Bartoo writes, *"Material Excess* isn't exactly a rejection of materialism… It's a difficult, frequently funny, and ultimately humane discourse on humanity's primary intellectual activity." *(Scott Stark)*

Sunday, February 22 and Thursday, February 26

A Picture Rarely Seen: Joseph Cornell Centenary
Co-presented with Anthology Film Archives

In celebration of the hundredth anniversary of the birth of Joseph Cornell on Christmas Eve, 1903, San Francisco Cinematheque and Anthology Film Archives present two programs featuring works made by Cornell and drawn from his personal collection (the majority now part of a rare collection at Anthology Film Archives). Program curators Bradley Eros and Jeanne Liotta will introduce both programs. In addition to the Cinematheque screenings, two Cornell programs will screen at Pacific Film Archive on Tuesday, February 24 at 7 pm and 9 pm. For program information, please visit www.bampfa.berkeley.edu. *(Bradley Eros, Jeanne Liotta)*

Sunday, February 22 at 7:30 pm
California College of the Arts

A Picture Rarely Seen: Joseph Cornell Centenary Program 1: Essential Cinema

It can be said that Cornell made two kinds of films in two distinct periods of activity: collage films, made by recombining found materials; and directed films, on which he worked with cinematographers (including Stan Brakhage, Rudy Burckhardt and Larry Jordan) to document his fantasies and experiences of wandering in New York. Though rarely exhibited during his lifetime, these mysterious works nonetheless have had a deep and lasting influence on various prominent avant-garde makers. This program includes ***Rose Hobart***, ***Vaudeville Deluxe***, ***Bookstalls***, ***By Night with Torch and Spear***, ***Aviary***, ***GniR RednoW***, ***Nymphlight*** and ***A Legend for Fountains***. *(Bradley Eros, Jeanne Liotta)*

Thursday, February 26 at 7:30 pm
Yerba Buena Center for the Arts

A Picture Rarely Seen: Joseph Cornell Centenary Program 2: A Picture Rarely Seen

This program of restored early films from Cornell's unique private collection provides insight into the sources, materials, inspirations and obsessions of the artist. It includes fantasy trickfilms, nickleodeon shorts, early animations and classic Méliès that Cornell selected for a film soiree in 1949 at A New Art School, New York City. Among the films: ***A Picture Rarely Seen***, ***Unusual Cooking***, ***Hanky Panky Card Tricks***, Feuillade's ***When Leaves Fall***, Méliès' ***The Knight of Black Art***, ***Metamorphosis*** and ***Loie Fuller***. *(Bradley Eros, Jeanne Liotta)*

Sunday, February 29 at 7:30 pm
California College of the Arts

Towards a Spectral Cinema: A Special 3-D Performance
Zoe Beloff In Person

Visual magician Zoe Beloff joins us from New York with ***Lost***, ***Shadow Land*** and a sneak preview of her installation ***The Ideoplastic Materializations of Eva C.*** Beloff wants to "reanimate the great nineteenth century visual forms that have been discarded–the ghost show, the séance, the stereo-view, the diorama and the phantasmagoria–to create new cinematic languages and open up spaces where phantoms of history can cross over into our world." In *Lost*–a performance with stereo slides, hand-cranked film and a 78 rpm gramophone–storefronts, like dusty dioramas of a forgotten museum, come to life. *Shadow Land* and *Eva C.*, both based on accounts of materializing mediums, present the séance as "home theatre," at once proto- and post-cinema, where unconscious desires are conjured up and acted out. *(Irina Leimbacher)*

Thursday, March 4 at 7:30 pm
Yerba Buena Center for the Arts

War Vision: New and Old Work by Harun Farocki
Co-presented with Goethe-Insitut San Francisco

These pieces by radical German film essayist Harun Farocki explore the complex and shifting relationships between violence, visibility and technology in the context of war. Produced at the height of Vietnam, ***Inextinguishable Fire*** (1969) presents a Brechtian analysis of the production and use of napalm, corporate involvement in the technology of terror, and how violence is rendered (in)visible. Thirty-four years and dozens of films later, Farocki's ***War at a Distance*** (*Erkennen und Verfolgen,* 2003) brilliantly navigates and explores the connections between machine-vision, violence and capitalist production practices in the context of the Gulf War and the global economy. Farocki demonstrates that our naive anthropocentric notions of vision and the visible are obsolete in today's world. This is a special Bay Area preview. *(Irina Leimbacher)*

Sunday, March 7 at 7:30 pm
California College of the Arts

Harry Partch's Delusion of the Fury
Presented in cooperation with Other Minds

The Harry Partch Foundation has given us a very rare opportunity to see the original 16mm film of maverick composer Harry Partch's most accomplished masterpiece. ***Delusion of the Fury: A Ritual of Dream and Delusion*** enacts two interlocking fables, one Japanese and one African. It was written for six actors, four singers and a large ensemble of Partch's own handmade instruments, and premiered in January 1969 at UCLA. The piece is one of the best examples of Partch's concept of "corporeality," or "total theater," integrating music, dance, stagecraft and ritual. Directed by Madeline Tourtelot and edited by Les Blank, the film version further incorporates this idea, with the camera itself moving among the mimes and musicians on stage. *(Konrad Steiner)*

Thursday, March 11 at 7:30 pm
Yerba Buena Center for the Arts

Trace Elements: Films and Videos by Gunvor Nelson
Gunvor Nelson In Person

One of the central figures of the avant-garde film movement that emerged in the Bay Area in the 1960s, Swedish native Gunvor Nelson returns to San Francisco for a much-anticipated screening of recent and older work. Known for her exquisite compositions, painterly activation of the film's surface, and playful blending of physical and cinematic space, Nelson's works reveal deeply personal responses to her subjects. Tonight's program includes her three recent digital video works: ***Tree-Line*** (1998), ***Snowdrift*** (2001) and the local premiere of ***Trace Elements*** (2003), as well as a mini-retrospective of 16mm films spanning three decades: ***Schmeerguntz*** (1966), ***My Name is Oona*** (1969), ***Take Off*** (1972) and ***Time Being*** (1991). Steve Anker writes, "The films of Gunvor Nelson compose one of the great bodies of independent work in the history of the medium." *(Scott Stark)*

Sunday, March 14 at 7:30 pm
California College of the Arts

Acting Out: Performative Videos by Bain and Hernandez
Claire Bain and Al Hernandez In Person

Claire Bain and Al Hernandez have performed in their own and in each others' work for over a decade, simultaneously constructing and deconstructing various personae for the camera. Taking the subject/object politics of photographic representation into their own hands, their multiple characters play to the camera or to each other. Sometimes studied, sometimes ad-libbed, they often inhabit the slippery spaces between self-mockery, playfulness and serious social commentary. Tonight's program features both recent and older work: Bain's ***True Nature*** (2003), their collaborative double-channel video ***New Year's Resolution*** (1999–2000; remember Y2K?), Hernandez' lyrical Super-8 ***Jump Fence*** (2002 condensed version) and his new exploration of identity as performance ***My Name is Alejandro!*** (2003). We'll conclude with a short performance by Bain as her video alter ego Jennifer. *(Irina Leimbacher)*

Thursday, March 18 at 7:30 pm
Yerba Buena Center for the Arts

Barbara Hammer's *Resisting Paradise*
Barbara Hammer In Person
Co-presented with San Francisco Jewish Film Festival

We're excited to present a SNEAK PREVIEW of Barbara Hammer's new film, ***Resisting Paradise***, a provocative experimental documentary that leads viewers on a participatory journey of discovery through very timely questions: What are our responsibilities during political crises? How does art exist during a time of war? The filmmaker's personal voice ruminates on these themes through the frame of the historical and actual landscape of the town of Cassis, France. We uncover the actions of WWII French Resistance fighters Marie-Ange Allibert Rodriguez and Lisa Fittko; Hammer, as an artist struggling with the proximity of the war in Kosovo; the correspondence between Matisse, painting in Cassis, and his friend Bonnard; and the spectre of German Jewish philosopher Walter Benjamin. This range of subjects and materials forms an archaeology of human will that interweaves the questions and responsibilities of artistic production during political upheaval. *(Maïa Cybelle Carpenter)*

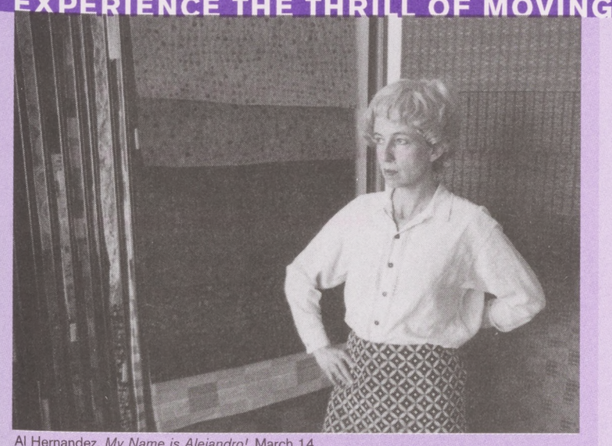
Robert Fox, *The Greater Vehicle*, February 5

Christian Bruno and Natalija Vekic, *Twilight of the Celluloid Age*, February 5

Gregg Biermann, *Material Excess,* February 19

Harry Partch, *Delusion of the Fury: A Ritual of Dream and Delusion,* March 7

EXPERIENCE THE THRILL OF MOVING IMAGE EXPRESSION



Al Hernandez, *My Name is Alejandro!,* March 14

Barbara Hammer, *Resisting Paradise*, March 18

Phillip Hoffman, *?O, Zoo! The Making of a Fiction Film*, April 4

Sunday, March 21 at 7:30 pm
California College of the Arts

A Program of Blind Films and Daguerrosounds by Alex Mendizabal
Alex Mendizabal In Person
Sponsored by the Consulate General of Spain, San Francisco

"Understanding cinema as *kynema*, motion, and understating that image is not a visual prerogative, blind films hitch perceptible sources in a homemade animated theatre place." So writes Basque composer, improvisor and instrument builder Alex Mendizabal, who will visit tonight for a rare presentation of his mysterious and moving ***Blind Films***, spatialized cinematic experiences of pure sound, performed live in pure and total darkness, over, under, around and through the traditionally seated audience. "A set of sound motion and low synthesis sources such as wall harps, voice transmitters, cowboy horns, distant string-actioned cups, cold-water boiling pans, chamber birds, low fi acoustic multi channel, ... pursuing daguerrosound images and movies out of vision." *(Steve Polta)*

Thursday–Friday, March 25–26

City Slivers and Fresh Kills: The Films of Gordon Matta-Clark
Co-sponsored by Aidlin Darling Design, TANNERHECHT Architecture and San Francisco Art Institute

Renegade "anarchitect" Gordon Matta-Clark is justly celebrated for his deconstructions of abandoned buildings and industrial structures, yet his film works are often overlooked. Seeking to shed new light on this aspect of his fascinating oeuvre, Cinematheque is thrilled to present a two-evening retrospective of Matta-Clark's films, which further his lifelong excavation of aesthetic assumptions, urban reality and philosophical inquiry with cranes, chainsaws and floods of natural light. These extraordinary, rarely seen works date from 1971 to 1977, Matta-Clark's most prolific and vital period. Focusing on architectural projects and performances, the films are far more than simple documentations of Matta-Clark's artistic activities; rather, they stand independently as fascinating cinematic explorations, and are characterized by the same creative provocation, rough aesthetic beauty and intellectual insight that informed the anarchitect's famous cuttings, slicings and revelations. *(Steven Jenkins)*

Thursday, March 25 at 7:30 pm
San Francisco Art Institute

City Slivers and Fresh Kills: The Films of Gordon Matta-Clark Program One: Fresh Kills

The first of our Matta-Clark programs focuses on early, performative works for which the artist climbed tall trees and hung precariously from nets (***Tree Dance***), set fire to urban detritus in Brooklyn (***Fire Child***) and surrendered his beloved truck, Herman Meydag, to the gleeful clang and wreckage of bulldozers (***Fresh Kill***). Provocative, playful and physically daring, these performance films paved the way for Matta-Clark's singular mode of deconstruction, evident here in ***Bingo***, for which he divided the exterior façade of a townhouse in Niagra Falls into nine sections. Rounding out the program is ***Office Baroque***, a revealing documentary of Matta-Clark working on a massive project in Antwerp. Following the films, Jane Crawford–Matta-Clark's widow and the executor of his estate–will present a slide show, providing a very personal perspective on the artist, his life and work. *(Steven Jenkins)*

Friday, March 26 at 7:30 pm
San Francisco Art Institute

City Slivers and Fresh Kills: The Films of Gordon Matta-Clark Program Two: City Slivers

Five more films that delve deep into Matta-Clark's obsession with buildings, gaps, cuts, slices…and fish? Indeed, while challenging himself with increasingly ambitious deconstructions both in the U.S and Europe, Matta-Clark donned a chef's hat and opened Food, which became a popular greasy spoon in downtown Manhattan. The informally observational ***Food*** hungers for the possibility of conceptual art through capitalist ventures and secret recipes, while the formally abstract ***City Slivers*** seeks privacy in the public sphere of New York City's sliced, diced streets. ***Conical Intersect*** finds Matta-Clark creating a silent "son-et-lumiere" in Paris, while ***Clockshower*** finds him as silent film star Harold Lloyd, having a close shave on top of Manhattan's Clocktower. ***Day's End*** rounds out the program on an appropriately solitary note. Following the films, a panel of architects, artists, filmmakers and curators will discuss Matta-Clark's films and his legacy as our last action hero. *(Steven Jenkins)*

Thursday, April 1 and Sunday, April 4

Passing Through: A Philip Hoffman Retrospective

Canadian filmmaker Philip Hoffman has been making films for the past 25 years. He has been engaged in the education and inspiration of many young filmmakers through his courses at Sheridan College, York University, and his hand-processed film workshops at his rural Ontario farm. Hoffman's films have been described as "experimental diarist cinema," an intimate first-person collision of fiction, documentary and formal experimentation. This hybrid approach to his artistic practice presents a cinema of slippages that questions the reality of representation through the daily material of life–and the material properties of the film medium–to explore themes of memory, family and loss. *(Maïa Cybelle Carpenter)*

Thursday, April 1 at 7:30 pm
Yerba Buena Center for the Arts
Please arrive at 7:00 pm if you would like to take part in *Opening Series*

Passing Through: A Philip Hoffman Retrospective Program One: *What these ashes wanted*

"What these ashes wanted (2001) places flesh on the poet Ann Carson's words, 'death lines every moment of ordinary time.' With this work Hoffman resides in an acutely intimate time, a daily practice of loss lived precariously between the terror of psychic disintegration and the provisional solace taken through public rituals of mourning. The film is not a story of surviving death, but rather of living death through a heightening of the quotidian moments of everyday experience." *(Karyn Sandlos, Images Festival, Toronto, 2001)* ***Opening Series:*** Before the screening begins, 12 boxes of film, each pasted with an image (not representational of the contents), will be placed in order by audience members. Hoffman will then splice them together in the participants' chosen order to form a unique film. With this communal and interactive ordering that places the "starting experiences of the present–light, rhythm, and color," the audience and film come together in the moment. *(Maïa Cybelle Carpenter)*

Sunday, April 4 at 7:30
California College of the Arts

Passing Through: A Philip Hoffman Retrospective Program Two: Somewhere Between

Through the years, Hoffman's films have built upon a dialogue of personal history and memory, bringing together formal strategies that encompass both the conceptual and the accidental. ***Somewhere Between Jalostotitlan and Encarnacion*** (1984), ***passing through/torn formations*** (1988), ***?O,Zoo! (The Making of a Fiction Film)*** (1986) and ***river*** (1979-89) negotiate this developing sense of the daily process of living loss and integrating a multiplicity of meanings of death into everyday life. *(Maïa Cybelle Carpenter)*

Screenings and events that Cinematheque is proud to co-present:

Friday–Saturday, February 6–7 and 13–14 at 8 pm
San Francisco Art Institute
$24 festival pass; $8 general admission; $6 SFAI students and Cinematheque members

The Eleventh San Francisco Art Institute International Film/Video Festival

Once a long-standing treasure of local film exhibition, the SFAI Film Festival rises again to celebrate personal cinema from around the world. Participants range in age and background, and include established filmmakers alongside newer voices. Festival programs feature works by Tommy Becker, Gregg Biermann, Louise Bourque, Roger Deutsch, David Ellsworth, Brian Frye, Nicky Hamlyn, Matt Hulse, Takahiko Iimura, Karen Johannesen, Aurelio Kopainig, Marie Losier, Scott Nyerges, Helen Pau, Marina Potak, Robert Todd, Francien van Everdingen, Michael Wilson and others, with films and videos in virtually every exhibition format. For complete festival info, please visit www.sfcinematheque.org or email filmfestival@sfai.edu. *(Janis Crystal Lipzin, Festival Director)*

Friday–Sunday, February 20–22 at 7:00 pm
Delancey Street Theater
$10 general admission per screening

Armenian Film Festival

The Armenian Film Festival includes films and videos with Armenian themes from filmmakers in Armenia and throughout the worldwide diaspora. The unique, topical works in this festival range from narrative to experimental, documentary to fiction, features to shorts, all made by filmmakers in the Middle East, Europe and North America. Rather than focusing on historical or contemporary canonical filmmakers such as Bek-Nazarian, Paradjanov or Pelechian, programs highlight current pieces that reveal a surprising breadth of approaches and issues relevant to the current moment. Across formal and geographical differences, recognizable themes of displacement, loss, memory, trauma and recognition emerge. Experimental works include Hrayr Anmahouni's ***Tebi Gyank***, Serge Avedikian's ***Ligne de Vie***, Nigol Bezjian's ***Road Full of Apricots*** and Vardan Hakopian's ***The Duduk***. For complete festival info, please visit www.armenianfilmfestival.org. *(Anahid Kassabian, Festival Director)*

Saturday, March 6 at 9:30 pm
AMC Kabuki 8 Theatres

San Francisco International Asian American Film Festival *Invisible Light* (*Geu Jip Ap*)

South Korean writer-director Gina Kim is mastering the art of baring one's soul in front of the camera. In her debut narrative feature ***Invisible Light***, lingering, meticulously framed shots expose the turbulent and varying emotions of inner struggle and psychological extremes. Choi Yoon Sun and Lee Sun Jin give daring performances as two women faced with despair, yet struggling to reclaim their mental strength. Gah-in is having an affair with Do-hee's husband. Distressed by her illicit affair, she retreats into her house, disconnects the phone and loses herself in a self-hating routine of starving and binging. At the same time, Do-hee learns that she is pregnant with another man's child, leaves her husband and returns to Korea. Both women are stripped naked, physically and psychically, as Kim provides an unflinching gaze into their darkest hours. *(Innbo Shim, SFIAAFF 2004 Program Guide)*

For our East Coast Friends

Friday, February 13 at 7:30 pm
Anthology Film Archives, New York

Haptic Refractions: A Cameraless Evening

A cinema based on touch, gestures of contact between the surface of film and the world, is the basis of tonight's screening. Emulsive transformations, both human and the earth's, palimpsests of paint and scratchings, or traces left by light and life transform the site of film into a new experience of sight. Films include Alexis Bravos' ***The World's Dry Lever***; Karen Johannesen's ***Untitled***; Saul Levine's ***Light Lick: Only Sunshine***; Izabella Pruska-Oldenhof's ***Light Magic***; Steve Polta's ***A Glimpse of Soviet Science***; Luis Recoder's ***Silver Recovery***; Rock Ross' ***Psycho Porpoise***; silt's performance of their triptych ***Untitled*** (excerpted from *All Pieces of a River Shore*), a continuation of their investigations of film emulsion as a microcosmic peering into the earth's crust; Phil Solomon and Stan Brakhage's ***Concrescence***; and Fred Worden's ***Automatic Writing 2***. Cinematheque curator Steve Polta will introduce the screening. *(Irina Leimbacher, Steve Polta)*

Venues

AMC Kabuki 8 Theatres
1881 Post Street at Fillmore
415.938.9800
www.naatanet.org

California College of the Arts
1111 Eighth Street at Irwin
415.703.9500
www.ccarts.edu
CCA CALIFORNIA COLLEGE OF THE ARTS

Delancey Street Theater
600 Embarcadero at Townsend
415.957.9800

Ninth Street Center for Independent Film
145 Ninth Street at Minna
415.552.1990

San Francisco Art Institute
800 Chestnut Street at Jones
415.771.7020
www.sanfranciscoart.edu

Yerba Buena Center for the Arts
701 Mission Street at Third
415.978.2787
www.yerbabuenaarts.org

(UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED)
$7 General

$4 Members, Students (with ID), Disabled, Seniors

CCA students admitted free to CCA screenings